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ABSTRACT

This book examines the identity and schooling of working class women through the stories of 15 women from a working-class Philadelphia neighborhood and 15 women from southern rural communities who eventually moved to neighborhoods near Duke University in North Carolina. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the book and the study on which it is based. The two research settings are described in chapter 2. Chapter 3 focuses on how the women's attitudes toward knowledge acquired in school and "common sense" shaped their identifies and stance toward schooling. The historical and institutionally specific conditions that shaped the women's life paths and self-concept are detailed in chapter 4, and chapter 5 explains how the urban-bureaucratic and rural-community school contexts each produced its own set of student self-understandings, views of teachers' authority and knowledge, and anxieties about learning. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 deal respectively with the women's attitudes toward teachers, mother-daughter bonds, and motivations for returning to school. Chapter 9 discusses the emotional and psychological insight into the effects of class, race, and gender oppression provided by the women's stories and offers suggestions for eliminating the institutional, cultural, and psychological barriers impeding meaningful and egalitarian school relationships. The book contains 334 references. (MN)

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